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ABSTRACT

The major schools of journalism in the United States established themselves during the first 25 years of the 20th century. These schools formed an important part of the broader professionalizing project within journalism. Over the next 30 years, this elite group of schools attempted to make a degree from a professional school of journalism the required credential for all aspiring journalists. They fought not only against traditional on-the-job methods of training, but also against journalism schools that did not share their vision of professional education. By the mid-1950s, these conflicts had led to a stalemate. The elite schools were unable to build a strong alliance with the industry, and there remained in place a number of alternative routes into journalism and a number of different philosophies of journalism education. Unlike other professions, in which a strong professionalizing coalition made up of practitioners and educators was able to create a system of restricted professional education, in journalism no such coalition emerged. (Sixty-one notes are included.) (RS)

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An Applied Social Science: Journalism Education and Professionalization, 1900-1955

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

I. Introduction

The major schools of journalism in the United States established themselves during the first twenty-five years of this century. These schools formed an important part of a broader professionalizing project within journalism. Over the next thirty years, this elite group of schools attempted to make a degree from a professional school of journalism the required credential for all aspiring journalists. They fought not only against traditional on-the-job methods of training, but also against journalism schools that did not share their vision of professional education. By the mid-1950s, these conflicts had led to a stalemate. The elite schools were unable to build a strong alliance with the industry,[1] and there remained in place a number of alternative routes into journalism and a number of different philosophies of journalism education.

Journalism historians have not paid a good deal of attention to journalism education as yet. The dominant interpretation remains

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[1]The quintessential examples of such an industry/educator alliance are found in medicine and law. See, for example, Paul Starr, The Social Transformation of American Medicine (New York: Basic Books, 1982), 117-123; Christopher Jencks and David Riesman, The Academic Revolution (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 202; Michael Schudson, "The Flexner Report and the Reed Report: Notes on the History of Professional Education in the United States," Social Science Quarterly 55 (1974), 350-351; Harold Wilensky, "The Professionalization of Everyone?" American Journal of Sociology 70 (1964), 145-146.

the whiggish one that, until very recently, dominated the history of journalism.[2] Education was taken as simply another signpost on the road to a more responsible and more independent press.[3] The revisionist tendencies that have enlivened journalism history in the past ten years have addressed journalism education only indirectly in their critical examinations of the notions of objectivity, sensationalism and social responsibility.[4]

This paper will analyze both the formative period in journalism education and the conflicts of the later period. It will focus mainly on newspaper journalism, as this was the educators' overriding concern. It is not the history of any particular school, but rather of the rhetoric employed by the schools as they fought their educational battles. The dividing lines were perhaps not as sharply drawn in the minds of the educators as they will be presented here, but the analysis to follow captures the major trends in the history of journalism education during this period.

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[2]James W. Carey, "The Problem of Journalism History," Journalism History 1 (1974), 3-5, 27; Joseph P. McKerns, "The Limits of Progressive Journalism History," Journalism History 4 (1977), 88-92.

[3]See, for example, Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism: A History of Newspapers in the United States Through 250 Years, 1690-1940 (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1941), 488-489, 604-605, 727-728; Edwin Emery, The Press and America: An Interpretative History of Journalism (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1962), 735-740.

[4]Of particular note are Michael Schudson, Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers (New York: Basic Books, 1978); Dan Schiller, Objectivity and the News: The Public and the Rise of Commercial Journalism (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981).

II. The Formative Period

Education for journalists was not an entirely new idea at the end of the nineteenth century.[5] But of the scattering of courses established prior to 1900, few proved enduring. The big boost for separate institutions providing instruction for journalists came in 1903, when Joseph Pulitzer announced a $2 million bequest to Columbia University to establish a school of journalism. Quarrels between Pulitzer and Columbia over the exact institutional arrangements, however, prevented the school's opening until 1912, after Pulitzer's death. The time lapse allowed the University of Missouri to claim the honor of establishing the first separate school of journalism, which opened its doors in 1908.[6]

By 1925, most of the leading journalism programs had been established, either as separate schools or as separate programs within other schools. This core group of 32 schools dominated the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism

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[5]In 1914, The Independent reprinted a letter to the editor dated 1864 recommending the establishment of a school for newspaper editors. The Independent, June 5, 1914, pp. 480-481.

[6]Albert Alton Sutton, Education for Journalism in the United States from Its Beginning to 1940 (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1945), 7-13; De Forest O'Dell, The History of Journalism Education in the United States (New York: Columbia University Teachers' College, 1935), 1-96; Don Carlos Seitz, "Episodes in the School's Prehistory--Landmarks in the Lengthy Struggle," in Heinz-Dietrich Fischer and Christopher Trump, Education in Journalism: The 75th Anniversary of Joseph Pulitzer's Ideas at Columbia University (1904-1979) (Bochum, West Germany: Studienverlag Brockmeyer, 1980), 63-92.

(AASDJ), founded in 1917.[7] This organization was the strongest advocate for a system of elite professional schools that would strictly regulate entry into journalism.

A variety of factors explains the emergence of journalism schools during this period. Of major importance is the most mundane reason of all: money. Huge fortunes could now be amassed through journalism, so there were funds available for the establishment of journalism schools.[8] But to understand why that money was used to establish schools of journalism, the best place to start is the Progressive critique of the press that took shape between 1900 and World War I, and reappeared in slightly altered form after the war.[9]

This critique rested on the charge that the press served class

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[7]Edwin Emery and Joseph McKerns, "AEJMC: 75 Years in the Making: A History of Organizing for Journalism and Mass Communications Education in the United States," Journalism Monographs 104 (1987), 1; Sutton, Education for Journalism, pp. 26-27, 36-38.

[8]Besides Pulitzer's bequest, a partial list would include the Tribune Company's continuing financial support of Northwestern's Medill School, Minnesota Tribune publisher William Murphy's $350,000 bequest to the University of Minnesota, and Ward Neff's donation to the University of Missouri for a separate journalism building. See Sara Lockwood Williams, Twenty Years of Education for Journalism (Columbia, Missouri: E.W. Stephens Publishing, 1929), 36; William R. Lindley, Approaches of Selected American Universities to the Education of Journalists (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1970), 28; H.F. Harrington memorandum, February 7, 1931, Medill School of Journalism Papers (MSJP), Box 16, Folder 1, "Establishment and History"; Richard Kendrick, "An Outline History of the Medill School of Journalism from 1930-34," (unpublished term paper, 1939), MSJP, Box 16, Folder 1, "Establishment and History," Northwestern University Archives.

[9]The Progressive period is generally seen to be one of the three major periods of press criticism in this country. The other two periods are the 1830s and the 1960s. See Schudson, Discovering the News; Schiller, Objectivity and the News, p. 187.

interests at the expense of the republic. Throughout the period, this same theme would be expressed in a variety of different ways. The strongest variant was that the press was in the pocket of the moneyed interests of society. Since publishing had become a rich man's game, publishers shared the values of the upper classes and shaped the content of their papers accordingly. In addition, the press was held hostage by big business because of newspaper dependence on advertising revenues. One of the most influential of such criticisms was Upton Sinclair's The Brass Check. Sinclair's polemic on the prostitution of the press went through six printings in its first year for a total of over 100,000 copies.[10]

After World War I, this strain of criticism took a further turn. Now the press was less a willing accomplice in propping up the interests of the moneyed class and more a manipulable instrument. The war had demonstrated the power of press agents and propaganda, and business and government leaders increasingly filtered relations with the press through their public relations men. Shut out from their sources, newspapers simply reprinted the biased information provided by press agents.[11]

Reformist elements within the press, along with the nascent

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[10]Upton Sinclair, The Brass Check: A Study of American Journalism, (Pasadena, California: By the author, 1920); Problems of Journalism, 1924 Proceedings, American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE), p. 115.

[11]Schudson, Discovering the News, pp. 136-141. For a prominent educator's critique of the system of promotion men, see Eric W. Allen, "The Social Value of a Code of Ethics for Journalists," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences 101 (1922), 174.

group of journalism educators, agreed with the critics' major premise: A more public-spirited press was vital to a healthy democracy. "The present crisis of western democracy," Walter Lippmann wrote in 1920, "is a crisis in journalism."[12] Public opinion needed to be made truly public, not representative of a particular class interest. Such an improvement in public opinion, given the belief in the direct and instrumental effect of the press, could be obtained almost automatically by improving newspapers.[13]

Journalism educators and press reformers advocated a specific way to achieve this improvement: professionalization. To improve journalism required an improved breed of journalist, one that adhered to a professional standard of disinterested public service. This improved journalist would require special training in the ethics and methods of professional journalism--a task which was to be the privileged responsibility of the journalism schools. This line of thought is laid out clearly in the statement of "Principles and Standards of Education for Journalism" adopted by the AASDJ at its 1924 annual meeting. "Because of the importance of newspapers and periodicals to society and government, adequate preparation is as necessary for all persons who desire to engage in journalism as it is for those who intend to practice law or medicine. No other

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[12]Cited in Schiller, Objectivity and the News, p. 191.

[13]See, for example, Northwestern University President Walter Dill Scott's conception of the mission of the Medill School of Journalism in an undated press release and Scott's speech at the dedication of Medill School, February 8, 1921, MSJP, Box 16, Folder 1, "Establishment and History," Northwestern University Archives.

profession has a more vital relation to the welfare of society and to the success of democratic government than has journalism."[14]

The hallmarks of the professionally trained journalist would be accuracy and context. Journalism would devote itself to relaying not only facts, but also a true understanding of society. It would thus keep its distance from both the masses and the interests; the truth would stand apart from any social class. Even after World War I, when the success of propaganda and public relations rendered the notion of an independent and objectively verifiable truth less tenable, journalists embraced an interpretive style of reporting that conveyed, if not the truth, at least an analysis that was not beholden to any particular social group.[15]

Journalism, in the words of Eric Allen, dean of the University of Oregon's school of journalism, should be "applied social science." The University of Wisconsin's Willard Grosvenor Bleyer, one of the most influential figures in the early history of journalism education, argued similarly that the purpose of journalism courses was to teach students how to "think straight" and "how to apply what they have learned to understanding and interpreting the day's news."[16]

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[14]"Principles and Standards of Education for Journalism," The Journalism Bulletin 1 (1924), 30.

[15]Schudson, Discovering the News, pp. 134-159; Allen, "The Social Value of a Code of Ethics," p. 174.

[16]Eric W. Allen, "Journalism as Applied Social Science," Journalism Bulletin 4 (1927), 2; Willard Grosvenor Bleyer, "What Schools of Journalism are Trying to Do," Journalism Quarterly 8 (1931), 39.

These improved journalists would not shun crime news--the bane of those critics who derided the sensational press--but they would put it in proper context. In a 1925 address, educator Nelson Crawford said the function of the press regarding sensational material "should be not simply to tell of anti-social acts, and perhaps adopt the emotional reactions of the mob concerning them, but to analyze them, to point out their genesis and their significance. . . . The press at present deals largely with phenomena, which are likely to appear isolated and to be unintelligible without an understanding of their causes." Schools of journalism, Crawford advised, should provide reporters with such analytical ability.[17]

Professional education was just one prong of the response of the press to the Progressive critique. Professional organizations--most notably, the American Society of Newspaper Editors--also flowered during this period, as part of an effort to enforce collegial discipline. State press associations, journalism schools, and other press organizations promulgated a variety of ethics codes to define and regulate professional behavior.[18] According to

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[17]Nelson Antrim Crawford, "Psychological Leadership for Journalism," The Journalism Bulletin 2 (1926), 4-5. Another example is provided by the Medill School's "newspaper of the future," a student exhibit in 1933. Crime news was buried in the inside pages and the stories focused on interpretation of the day's events. Don Hopkins, Jr., "A Short History of the Medill School of Journalism--1920 to 1934" (unpublished term paper, 1941?), MSJP, Box 16, Folder 1, "Establishment and History," Northwestern University Archives.

[18]Mott, American Journalism, p. 605; S. Gershanek and M.N. Ask, eds., Who's Who in Journalism (New York: Journalism Publishing Company, 1925), 332-338.

communications historian Dan Schiller, one important effect of the rhetoric of professionalism was to shift responsibility to the individual journalist, deflecting those critics who charged that the problem with journalism was systemic and structural.[19]

The role of the schools in this overall professionalization project was to restrict access to the occupation to those who were properly trained. When the American Society of Newspaper Editors formally endorsed the creation of professional schools in 1924, the educators lauded the decision in the pages of The Journalism Bulletin. "Nine-tenths of the battle for better journalism is won when the supply of reporters and editors is properly controlled and action of the kind taken is the biggest step toward proper attention to the supply because it recognizes one source and that source can impose high standards."[20]

III. The Schools' Strategy

The emergence of journalism schools can thus be traced back to the development of adequate financial resources and of a professionalizing project within the industry. The schools sought to restrict entry into the occupation to those who had received the proper training. The journalism degree was to become the required credential for employment.

Restricting access, however, became almost impossible with the

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[19]Schiller, Objectivity and the News, pp. 194-195.

[20]"Progress," The Journalism Bulletin 2 (1925), 19. See also R. Justin Miller, "The Professional Spirit," The Journalism Bulletin 1 (1924), 7.

rapid expansion of both journalism employment and the number of journalism schools from the 1920s onward. Overlapping with but largely following in the wake of the core schools, journalism schools soon began appearing all over the country. By 1940, Albert Sutton counted 542 colleges and universities offering instruction in journalism, although only 103 of these offered majors or degrees in journalism.[21] According to the census, that 20-year period witnessed a tremendous expansion in the "editors and reporters" category, which reached 58,253 in 1940, up from 34,197 in 1920.[22]

The elite group of schools affiliated with the AASDJ adopted a two-part strategy to combat these trends. First, they set themselves apart from the other schools by promoting a vision of "professional" journalism education that differed from the "trade school" orientation of the other schools. Second, they tried to bring practitioners in on their side by establishing an accrediting program that legitimated this type of "professional" education.

The first part of the elite schools' strategy depended on redefining the nature of the journalism curriculum. Typically, both the "trade" schools and the "professional" schools divided the curriculum into two parts: background courses taken in the university's social science departments and journalism courses taken in the journalism school. From Pulitzer onward, journalism

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[21]Sutton, Education for Journalism, 18-21.

[22]Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, vol.3, pt. 1, The Labor Force (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943), 75. The 1920 figure is cited in Lindley, Approaches, p. 10, who gives an even higher figure for 1940.

educators had argued that the new breed of journalist required a broad liberal arts education. Since professional journalism emphasized the context of news, the curriculum of journalism schools would obviously have to include a heavy dose of the social sciences. The elite schools advocated a curriculum that was 75% social science courses and 25% journalism courses.[23]

It was over the nature of that 25% that the real debate in journalism education took place. The elite schools sought to infuse their journalism courses with the social sciences, to make them courses in "applied social science," to use Eric Allen's term. "Well-organized" reporting and editing courses, Bleyer wrote in 1931, provided the student an opportunity to apply knowledge gained in background courses. "Even a clever office-boy with no more than a common school education may learn how to get news and how to write a passable news story. The course in reporting in a school of journalism is devoted largely to an intensive study of local news and its significance. . . . Thus it serves to correlate the work of news gathering and news writing with what students have learned in psychology, economics, and similar subjects." The editorial writing course, Bleyer continued, was less a writing course and more a course in the scientific analysis of current events.[24]

It is difficult to underestimate Bleyer's importance in promoting this view of journalism education. Bleyer was chairman of

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[23]Sutton, Education for Journalism, p. 55; Emery and McKerns, "75 Years in the Making," p. 5; Joseph Pulitzer, "The College of Journalism," The North American Review 178 (1904), 663-678.

[24]Bleyer, "What the Schools Are Trying to Do," pp. 39-40.

the AASDJ's Council on Education for Journalism for the first twelve years of its existence (1923-34), and played a leading role in formulating the statement of "Standards and Principles." As part of his devotion to academically rigorous journalistic training, he also pushed hard for journalism schools to become more research-oriented. Perhaps most importantly, Bleyer's program at Wisconsin graduated a number of influential journalism educators, who carried the vision of a scientific journalistic discipline to other schools.[25]

The elite schools set off their "professional" approach to journalism education from the "trade school" orientation of many other schools. This newer crop of journalism schools tended to be found on the campuses of lesser-known state universities. The elite schools accused them of teaching techniques without understanding. Students were dispatched to cover stories, their articles were edited and criticized by faculty who were usually journalists themselves, and the students were sent out to cover another story. The students' background knowledge withered and became useless because the students did not apply it to daily practice. In the AASDJ's view, this type of training was wholly inadequate for the professional journalist. Thus the AASDJ's "Standards and Principles" inveighed against courses "concerned merely with developing

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[25]The list of former Bleyer students who later became deans or directors of journalism schools includes, among others, Kenneth Olson of Northwestern, E. Marion Johnson and Ralph Casey of Minnesota, Lawrence W. Murphy of Illinois, and Chilton Bush of Stanford. Lindley, Approaches, pp. 29-97; Emery and McKerns, "75 Years in the Making," pp. 5, 18-19.

proficiency in journalistic technique. The aims and methods of instruction should not be those of a trade school but should be of the same standard as those of other professional schools."[26]

It is ironic that, given the AASDJ's haughtiness, most of the elite schools started with a similar "trade-school" orientation.[27] By the 1920s, however, the elite schools were rejecting such purely practical training. The improvement of journalism required more than old journalists teaching young students the state of current practice. The point was to move beyond current practice. While they retained the practical trappings of city room, student newspaper, and enforced deadline, the elite schools began to call for less reliance on practicing journalists as faculty and for more attention to academic credentials. Recruiting teachers on the basis of experience alone, one writer concluded, "will never produce 'the great American journalist.'"[28]

The case of Northwestern's Medill School provides an interesting example of the tensions involved in the evolution from practical to professional. Dean Kenneth Olson was the architect of the transformation. Looking back on his 16 years at the helm in 1953, he wrote with satisfaction to Northwestern's Dean of

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[26]"Principles and Standards," p. 32. See also L.N. Flint, "Comparing Notes on Courses," The Journalism Bulletin 1 (1924), 54.

[27]Henry Farrand Griffin, "Copy!," The Outlook, February 22, 1913, p. 428; Lindley, Approaches, p. 94.

[28]P.I. Reed, "The Ph.D. Calibre," The Journalism Bulletin 1 (1924), 44. See also Frank Scott, "Significance of the Ph.D.," The Journalism Bulletin 1 (1924), 88; Leslie Higginbotham, "Practice vs. Ph.D.," The Journalism Bulletin 1 (1924), 10-12.

Faculties that he had broken the curriculum away from "an entirely technical education." Under Olson, Medill's program combined broad background in the social sciences with rigorous professional training in journalism courses that were "not just technique courses, but courses in applied social science."[29]

Olson, however, was saddled with an immensely popular downtown division that offered almost purely technical courses. The downtown division had been the heart of Medill's early existence, offering evening classes to working and aspiring journalists. When Olson took over as Dean, downtown enrollments were four times greater than those on the Evanston campus, but well over half of the students were only high school graduates. It was irresponsible to "open wide the doors" to journalism education, Olson said, just as it was irresponsible for medical and law schools to permit unqualified students to take their courses. "Our main show must be out here on the Evanston campus building a strong professional school," Olson said.[30]

Olson could not eliminate the school outright, as it yielded about a $20,000 annual profit, but he abolished the certificate in journalism which had been awarded to students who successfully completed the prescribed regimen of technical courses. The certificate was indistinguishable from a diploma, Olson said, and

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[29]Olson to Dean of Faculties Payson Wild, November 10, 1953, MSJP, Box 16, Folder 5, "Correspondence," Northwestern University Archives.

[30]"Statement of the Needs of the Medill School of Journalism," 1939, MSJP, No Box #, Folder 1, "Reports, Proposals, Papers," Northwestern University Archives.

the school should not be supplying newspapers with "men and women who had only the flimsy educational background represented by this diploma program." He also downgraded the status of the Chicago campus to an audit extension division.[31]

The ultimate expression of the professional curriculum came in the 1930s, with the movement to transform journalism schools into graduate level professional schools. The elite schools had long held it as an ideal to require all entering students to hold bachelor's degrees. A number of schools had previously offered master's degrees, but these were mainly aimed at aspiring journalism teachers. The goal now was to make the master's the terminal professional degree, requiring a year or two of professional training.[32]

The Pulitzer School at Columbia restricted its year-long program in journalism to B.A. holders in 1935. Northwestern followed in 1937, when it eliminated its bachelor's degree in journalism, and began to offer only the master's. Although Medill's Dean Olson would look back on the creation of the "five-year program" as his preeminent contribution to the Medill curriculum, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that it failed in most respects. There were only two years in which no bachelor's degrees in journalism were awarded--1940 and 1941. In 1942, Olson restored the bachelor's degree owing to the war emergency, but advised that the

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[31]Ibid.

[32] "Toward Higher Standards," The Journalism Bulletin 1 (1924), 19; Eric Allen, "Presidential Address: Medical Schools, Law Schools and Schools of Journalism," Journalism Quarterly 8 (1931), 196-203.

five-year plan would be "put into full effect again as soon as the war is over." However, the bachelor's degree was not eliminated after the war. Indeed, it grew steadily, from one awarded in 1942 to 80 in 1948. Throughout the world of journalism education, in fact, the bachelor's has remained the standard journalism degree.[33]

Taken to its final conclusion, the downplaying of the technical side of journalism courses by the elite schools put the onus of practical training back on the newspapers themselves. In a review of the schools' achievements in 1925, an article in the Bulletin pointed out that most schools had realized that "the mere mechanics of newspaper work can best be taught in the shop." Stanford's journalism school director proclaimed that "it is the job of the newspaper itself to train its craftsmen."[34]

The first part of the elite schools' strategy was thus to distance their curriculum from that of the "trade" schools. Simultaneously, they worked to establish the hegemony of their professional vision through control of journalism school accrediting. The elite schools noted with approval the successful efforts of the medical profession in stemming the proliferation of medical

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[33]Emery, The Press and America, p. 738; "Summary of Proposed Plan for Reorganization of Medill School of Journalism," 1937; "Proposed Program for Restoration of Bachelor's Degree in Journalism," undated, MSJP, No Box #, Folder 1, "Reports, Proposals, Papers"; Olson to Dean of Faculties Payson Wild, November 10, 1953, MSJP, Box #16, Folder 5, "Correspondence," Northwestern University Archives.

[34]Joseph Myers, "What Have the Schools Done?" The Journalism Bulletin 2 (1925), 1; Lindley, Approaches, p. 88. See also Thomas Stritch, "A New Program of Studies for a Department," Journalism Quarterly 28 (1951), 83.

schools, and they waged a similar battle to limit the number of schools that offered journalism degrees.[35]

In its early days, the AASDJ had simply appointed itself the accrediting authority for journalism education. Membership in the Association was by invitation only, and invitation was contingent on adherence to AASDJ standards for journalism education. This self-assumed accrediting function was soon formally recognized by various higher education organizations, and the AASDJ members took to referring to themselves as "Class A" schools of journalism.[36] The Bulletin lauded these efforts, urging in a 1924 editorial that "schools of limited resources and limited size" should assume the role of pre-professional schools, channeling promising students to "institutions with full Class A rating."[37]

In the 1930s, the AASDJ moved to gain greater legitimacy for its accrediting program by obtaining the participation of practitioners. In 1930, after receiving expressions of support from various professional associations, the AASDJ formed a joint council--composed of five AASDJ educators and one member each from

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[35]"Too Many Schools?" The Journalism Bulletin 1 (1924), 61; George Turnbull, "The Comparative Size of the Journalism Field," Journalism Quarterly 8 (1931), 224-234; "The AASDJ Accepts New Accrediting Policy," Journalism Quarterly 22 (1945), 40; Allen, "Presidential Address," p. 198; "Building Schools of Medicine," The Journalism Bulletin 1 (1924), 99-102; "Convention Proceedings, American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism," Journalism Quarterly 24 (1947), 79.

[36]"The AASDJ Accepts New Accrediting Policy," p. 34; Emery and McKerns, "75 Years in the Making," p. 1.

[37]"Too Many Schools?" p. 61

the five main professional associations[38]--to establish a framework for accreditation. In 1945, the AASDJ relinquished its self-appointed accrediting role to this council, which vested power in a seven-member accrediting committee. Four of the seven members were to be educators from AASDJ schools.[39]

The AASDJ thus ceded its unilateral accrediting power to a more representative body, but retained its dominant voice in setting educational standards. It had also strengthened its ties with the industry, gaining greater legitimacy for itself as the exclusive arbiter of journalistic qualifications. Reflecting this new sense of legitimacy, the organization made membership automatic for all accredited schools, and in 1948 it changed its name from the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism to the Association of Accredited Schools and Departments of Journalism.[40]

Sensing that they were being squeezed out, the trade schools rebelled. In 1944, fourteen non-AASDJ schools formed a rival association (the American Society of Journalism School Administrators). The new association rallied around the banner of freedom in journalism education and presented itself as the champion of

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[38]The five professional associations were the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association, the Inland Daily Press Association and the National Editorial Association.

[39]"The AASDJ Accepts New Accrediting Policy," pp. 39-40, 43-44; Emery and McKerns, "75 Years in the Making," pp. 1, 32.

[40]The 1949 convention minutes are the first to refer to the organization's new name. "Official Minutes of 1949 AATJ-AASDJ-ASJSA Convention," Journalism Quarterly 26 (1949), 493.

"medium-sized grassroots journalism schools." It accused the AASDJ of imposing arbitrary yardsticks for accrediting and of "restraining and humiliating" schools not affiliated with the "junta" that controlled accrediting.[41]

The AASDJ did its best to ignore the rebels and push ahead with its accreditation program.[42] In 1953, however, the National Commission on Accreditation smashed those efforts. The National Commission had been established in 1950 by 1200 college and university presidents, who felt they were losing control over the professional schools on campuses. The National Commission wanted to put an end to the multiplicity of independent accrediting agencies, and put accreditation on an institution-wide basis. The AASDJ, however, insisted on the primacy of its own standards for journalism education. The National Commission responded by announcing that it would work with the trade schools' association in evaluating journalism programs.[43]

This turn of events shocked the AASDJ. Its efforts to establish a legitimate accrediting program suddenly were on the verge of being discarded. At the 1953 gathering of journalism teachers, the trade schools and the professional schools fought out their differences. Members of the trade schools' association reiterated their hostility to bureaucracy and regimentation, and to

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[41]Emery and McKerns, "75 Years in the Making," p. 26.

[42]Norval Neil Luxon, "Journalism Accrediting at the End of Five Years," Journalism Quarterly 28 (1951), 483-487.

[43]Emery and McKerns, "75 Years in the Making," pp. 27, 36.

the idea that "bigness" was proof of high quality. They called for local autonomy in evaluating journalism education, saying that students, faculty and local boards of trustees knew better "what kind of department should be maintained" than did some accrediting team sent in from the outside.[44]

The AASDJ blustered and defended its record, but in the end it was forced to compromise. In a late-night meeting with the leaders of the trade schools, AASDJ representatives agreed to allow the rival association to appoint two of the four educator members to the accrediting committee. The AASDJ thus retained the structure it had created for journalism accrediting, but forfeited its dominant voice within that structure. At the end of the 1953 meeting, the AASDJ president warned members that they must be "vigilant against attempts to water down the standards of journalism education. . . . We have gone as far as . . . can be expected . . . in co-operating on accrediting changes."[45]

Reflecting its disappointment with the power lost to the trade schools, the AASDJ no longer made membership in its own association automatic upon accreditation. Humbled, it changed its name back to the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism. Members even considered raising the standards for membership to levels well above those required for accreditation, but settled on a system that called for approval of new members by a majority of

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[44]"Official Minutes of the 1953 Convention, Association for Education in Journalism," Journalism Quarterly 30 (1953), 539.

[45]Ibid., pp. 539-549; Emery and McKerns, "75 Years in the Making," p. 28.

existing members.[46]

The trade schools, meanwhile, luxuriated in their new legitimacy. Although they resented the continuing rhetorical attacks by the AASDJ,[47] they proudly reiterated their own vision of journalism education in the years after the 1953 compromise. They stated their commitment to faculty with professional experience, a clear slap in the face of the AASDJ, which had been emphasizing the need for teachers with advanced degrees. The convention minutes also ring with reaffirmations of the "principles of freedom of journalism education."[48]

IV. The Schools and the Industry

The history of the professions is filled with similar examples of "trade" schools confronting "professional" schools. In medicine, there was a network of for-profit medical schools; in law, there was the group of night law schools. In those cases, however, organizations within the industry itself backed the professional schools over the trade schools. With aid from state regulation,

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[46]"Official Minutes of the 1954 Convention, Association for Education in Journalism," Journalism Quarterly 31 (1954), 530; "Official Minutes of the 1955 Convention, Association for Education in Journalism," Journalism Quarterly 33 (1956), 133-134; "Official Minutes of the 1956 Convention, Association for Education in Journalism," Journalism Quarterly 34 (1957), 155-156.

[47]See, for example, Emery and McKerns, "75 Years in the Making," p. 28.

[48]"Eleventh Convention of the American Society of Journalism School Administrators," Journalism Quarterly 33 (1956), 134; "Thirteenth Convention of the American Society of Journalism School Administrators," Journalism Quarterly 35 (1958), 142.

they marginalized these educational alternatives. Michael Schudson has characterized these struggles as evidence of the conflict between professionalism and the democratic ethos in American life. The trade schools represent democracy because they open up access to the occupation. In journalism, the freedom-of-choice rhetoric adopted by the trade schools reflected this democratic ethos. In journalism, however, practitioners did not close ranks behind the professional vision of education, as occurred in other professions.[49]

The elite schools' growing disparagement of courses emphasizing techniques progressively alienated many journalism practitioners. This alienation comes through clearly in the 1931 issue of Journalism Quarterly, the successor to the Bulletin. Reprinting the addresses from the educators' annual convention, the journal sandwiched Bleyer's social scientific description of what newswriting courses should be between two analyses by practicing journalists of what editors wanted from the schools. Both practitioners recommended that the schools provide more practical training.[50]

This type of split between practitioners and professional schools is not surprising. Practitioners frequently criticize

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[49]Schudson, "The Flexner Report and the Reed Report," pp. 347, 358-361; Jencks and Riesman, The Academic Revolution, p. 202.

[50]Harold B. Johnson, "What the Editors Expect of the Schools of Journalism," Journalism Quarterly 8 (1931), 30-32; Fred Fuller Shedd, "The Newspaper Heritage," Ibid., 52-55. See also Joseph Medill Patterson's address at the opening ceremonies of the Medill School, MSJP, Box 16, Folder 1, "Establishment and History," Northwestern University Archives.

professional schools for teaching overly academic material with limited practical use.[51] In journalism, unlike law or medicine, however, these splits between practitioners and the professional schools empowered the growing group of trade schools.

It is important to note that not all practitioners shared such attitudes. The American Society of Newspaper Editors, for example, issued a report in 1930 critical of the excessively vocational nature of the training offered in journalism schools. Similar sentiments were expressed at different times in Editor and Publisher.[52] In addition, the AASDJ was able to gain the support of the professional associations for its accrediting program. Clearly, there were important elements within the industry that shared the elite schools' professional vision.

Unfortunately for the AASDJ, these elements did not form a coherent professionalizing bloc within the industry. No single professional association commanded undivided respect. The American Society of Newspaper Editors, the group most sympathetic to the views of the AASDJ, was by no means representative of all the papers in the country. In addition, the AASDJ confronted a mix of news outlets that were alike only in that they were lumped together as mass media. Small town papers had different requirements than metropolitan dailies, which both differed from the country weekly,

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[51]Jencks and Riesman, The Academic Revolution, Ch. 5.

[52]Bleyer, "What the Schools Are Trying to Do," p. 43; Problems of Journalism, 1930 Proceedings, ASNE, pp. 44-47. See also Joseph Medill Patterson's attack on purely technical training in a New York Daily News editorial in 1935, MSJP, No Box #, Folder 1, "Reports, Proposals, Papers," Northwestern University Archives.

the trade journal, the magazine, and other forms of print journalism. The advent of news on radio, and later television, only added to the mixture. The dissimilarities between these various media prevented the development of a coherent industry position and common professional goals that could have empowered the AASDJ to regulate entry into the occupation.

No less important was the ambiguous attitude of the publishers toward professionalization. Publishers often observed the rhetoric of professionalization, but they also had an interest in keeping editorial wages low.[53] Strict control of entrance into the occupation worked against that interest. Indeed, almost from the outset, the educators criticized the publishers for not paying the journalism school graduates their worth. If the value of a professional education was not recognized in a journalist's salary, the educators argued, how could the schools attract the bright students so necessary for the improvement of journalism?[54]

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[53]The publishers were quite adept at manipulating the term "professional" to serve their interests. Publishers fought the trade union tactics of the Newspaper Guild, for example, in its effort to raise wages by declaring that collective bargaining was illegitimate among "professionals." See Arthur Robb, "Shop Talk at Thirty," Editor and Publisher, January 29, 1944, p. 52.

[54]See, for example, Northwestern University Bulletin: The President's Report for 1929-30, vol. 31, (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1930), 162; Allen, "The Social Value of a Code of Ethics," p. 175; Allen, "Presidential Address," pp. 204-206; "Earnings in Journalism," The Journalism Bulletin 2 (1925), 29-33. The ASNE also complained occasionally about the effect of low salaries on the professionalization of journalism. See Problems of Journalism, 1924 Proceedings, ASNE, p. 125.

Beginning in 1953, Journalism Quarterly began annual surveys of journalism school enrollments and placement, showing average starting salaries, always pointing out that the journalist earned substantially less than other professionally trained occupations.

The general history of the professions reveals that other occupations could overcome such structural disorganization when one or more groups within the occupation successfully mobilized the resources of the state to impose licensing requirements and certification. The professionalizing elements in journalism flirted with similar ideas. Bleyer, for example, supported efforts to obtain state licensing in Wisconsin. Qualms about the First Amendment and restrictions on the freedom of the press, however, usually intervened to prevent any sustained campaign.[55]

That threw the issue of licensing and certification back on the industry itself. During the period, various plans for professional examinations and licenses administered by industry-wide "press institutes" were offered up in the pages of the Bulletin and the Quarterly. Similarly, in its 1947 report, the Hutchins Commission endorsed the creation of a citizens' commission that would oversee and criticize press performance. Again, however, the fragmentation of the industry prevented the building of any such institution. As one student of the Hutchins Commission has written, "there was no agreed-upon framework or set of standards which a citizens' commission could apply in monitoring press perfor-

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[55]M.V. Atwood, "Proposed Plan for Certifying To Capability of Persons in Journalism," Journalism Quarterly 8 (1931), 24; John Drewry, "Presidential Address: The Journalist's Inferiority Complex," Journalism Quarterly 8 (1931), 21; Miller, "The Professional Spirit," p. 7; Donald K. Ross, "Willard G. Bleyer and Journalism Education," Journalism Quarterly 34 (1957), 473.

mance."[56] Similarly, no consensus could be reached on journalism education.

V. The Results

The end result of these various conflicts was the persistence of a number of alternative routes into journalism. A system of Class A schools of journalism restricting entry to only those with "professional" training did not emerge. Instead, the Class A schools existed alongside the trade schools and alongside more traditional types of on-the-job training both for holders of non-journalism liberal arts degrees and for those with only high school diplomas.

Evidence for these conclusions comes from a series of sociological studies of the backgrounds of journalists during the first 50 years of the schools' existence. These studies indicate that considerably less than half of the editors and reporters surveyed were trained in journalism schools. Table 1 reproduces the results of five such studies done between 1931 and 1954. In only one study did the proportion of journalism school-trained editors and reporters reach one third, and that level was achieved only in a study of one Milwaukee daily. While these figures provide only

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[56]Jerilyn S. McIntyre, "The Hutchins Commission's Search for a Moral Framework," Journalism History 6 (1979), 63; The Commission on Freedom of the Press, A Free and Responsible Press (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947), 100-102; E.J. Mehren, "Foreword: Ethics in Journalism," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 101 (1922), 169; Drewry, "The Journalist's Inferiority Complex," pp. 20-23; Atwood, "Proposed Plan," pp. 24-29.

crude indications, because of the widely different sample populations, the general conclusions are clear.

Table 1[57]: Degree-Holding
Among Journalists Surveyed, 1931-1954

Sample size	1931 (505)	1937 (127)	1941* (55)	1950* (112)	1954a (2,483)	1954b (633)
% holding: Bachelor's of Journalism	12.7**	10.2	33.0	30.0	26.6	20.1
Non-Journalism B.A.	40.8	51.1	55.5	60.0	54.2	70.5
Master's of Journalism	--	--	--	--	2.0	1.8
Non-Journalism M.A.	--	6.2	--	4.0	4.1	4.6

*: Studies of individual local newspapers. **: Percentage of those journalists surveyed who received "any professional training;" percentage of total sample not provided.

If a variety of pathways into the occupation persisted, it might be reasonable to expect to find certain types of aspiring journalists in greater concentration in certain pathways than in others. Throughout this period, journalism was predominantly a white male occupation, although white women made steady inroads. It

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[57]Sources: 1931: Robert Harrel and Walter Pitkin, Vocational Studies in Journalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 152. 1937: Leo Rosten, The Washington Correspondents (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1937), 328-329. 1941: Francis Prugger, "Social Composition and Training of Milwaukee Journal News Staff," Journalism Quarterly 18 (1941), 234. 1950: Warren Carl Engstrom, Social Composition and Training of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune News and Editorial Staffs (M.A. Thesis: University of Minnesota, 1950). 1954a and 1954b: Keen Rafferty and Leonard L. Jermain, "College Backgrounds of Staffs of American Daily Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly 41 (1954), 492.

seems reasonable to assume that the more informal paths of entry into the occupation would similarly be dominated by white men. Groups who were excluded from these pathways for reasons of gender, race or social class might then be more likely to turn to the formal credential of a journalism degree to gain access to the occupation. Such a hypothesis would be supported by data showing a marked difference between the make-up of the journalism student body and that of the occupation itself.

A gender analysis of the graduation lists for the first ten years of the Medill School at Northwestern, the first twenty years at the University of Missouri, and a 1925 list of 382 graduates from 26 different schools and departments show that women made up a greater percentage of the student body than of the occupation as a whole. For example, of the 916 who graduated from the University of Missouri journalism school between 1909 and 1928, 352 (38.4%) were women. Of the 227 who graduated from the Medill School between 1922 and 1931, 111 (48.8%) were women. And of the 1925 list, 156 (40.8%) were women. Figures from the census for the "editors and reporters" occupational category, on the other hand, show that women made up only 12.2% of the occupation in 1910, 16.8% in 1920, and 23% in 1930.[58] A similar analysis for race and class would

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[58]The graduation figures for Medill come from Northwestern University Bulletin: The President's Report, vols. 22-32 (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1922-31). The Missouri figures come from Williams, Twenty Years of Journalism Education, p. 453. The 1925 figures were published in "The 1925 Graduates," The Journalism Bulletin 2 (1925), 31-34. The occupational figures are from Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, vol. 5, General Report on Occupations (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933), 20.

perhaps show similar results.

Again, such figures provide only crude indications, but they are backed up by the visible discomfort of journalism educators at the number of women in their courses. A Wisconsin journalism professor wrote in 1928 that offering a course in "women's departments" broadened the available field of study, thus saving the school from "the embarrassment incident to the persistent influx of women students into journalism courses." Similarly, the Dean of the Medill School praised the 1937 reorganization of the program on a graduate basis because it "materially reduced the number of women in the school." In her own survey of the hostility of journalism educators toward women, Maurine Beasley concluded that "journalism education provided a credential for women who, far more than men, were barred from the alternative route of on-the-job training."[59]

VI. Conclusions

By the mid-1950s, the professional project that had motivated the initial creation of the schools began to recede in importance. The elite schools faced challenges on another front--the invasion of their academic turf by the new discipline of communications. Research began to play an increasingly important role in the elite

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[59]Maurine Beasley, "Women in Journalism Education: The Formative Period, 1908-1930," Journalism History 13 (1986), 17; "Study of the School of Journalism," 1940, MSJP, No Box #, Folder 1, "Reports, Proposals, Papers," Northwestern University Archives; Grant Hyde, "Raising the Quality of Students," The Journalism Bulletin 4 (1928), 21.

schools' justification of their existence. The year 1955 saw the first "rump session" devoted to the presentation of research in mass communications at the annual meeting of the journalism teachers. By 1958, it was a regular feature of the convention. Journalism Quarterly began its transformation into a forum for presenting quantitative research rather than proposals on furthering the professionalization of journalism.[60]

The rhetoric, however, remained in place. Course catalogs still promote the idea that a professional education is necessary for the aspiring journalist. This paper has located the source of this rhetoric in the formative period of journalism education and in the elite schools' battle to restrict entry into journalism. Unlike other professions, in which a strong professionalizing coalition made up of practitioners and educators were able to create a system of restricted professional education, in journalism no such coalition emerged.[61] Even though the schools could not shut

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[60]Emery and McKerns, "75 Years in the Making," pp. 39-40. The two cumulative indexes to Journalism Quarterly provide a useful categorization of articles that clearly shows the changing focus of the journal.

[61]This bears only indirectly on the question of whether journalism is really a profession. Theorists have abandoned the attempt to compile lists of a priori attributes that define a profession, so the lack of a required type of specialized training does not reflect directly on the question of journalism's status. Most recent work has looked more at questions of an occupation's self-perception as a profession and the status of its practitioners within society. See Randall Collins, "Changing Conceptions in the Sociology of the Professions," in Rolf Torstendahl and Michael Burrage, eds., The Formation of Professions: Knowledge, State and Strategy (London: Sage Publications, 1990), 11-23; Laurence Veysey, "Who's a Professional? Who Cares?" Reviews in American History 3 (1975), 419-423; Robert Dingwall, "Accomplishing Profession," Sociological Review 24 (1976), 331-349. Studies of journalists

down the alternative routes into journalism, the degree seems to have been a valuable credential for some who were barred from those alternative routes. Thus while the educators of the elite schools did not realize their vision of a small group of schools controlling access to journalism, perhaps the schools helped another group--the students--realize a different set of visions.

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include Jack McLeod and Searle Hawley, Jr., "Professionalization among Newsmen," Journalism Quarterly 41 (1964), 529-538, 577; Swen Windahl and Karl Erik Rosengren, "Newsmen's Professionalization: Some Methodological Problems," Journalism Quarterly 55 (1978), 466-473.